

An Embarrassment of Riches

I. Categories of the Greek New Testament Manuscripts

A. Papyri

1. The oldest as well as the fewest manuscripts
2. Mid-second century through the third century

B. Majuscules

1. All capital letters written on parchment
2. Continuous text manuscripts
3. 3rd-10th century

C. Minuscules

1. Cursive - lower case letters
2. Written in continuous text
3. 9th-18th century

D. Lectionaries

1. Books or portions of books
2. Capital and lowercase
3. Non continuous text

*We currently have approximately 5,800 numbered Greek manuscripts

II. Non-Greek Manuscripts

A. Total of approximately 20,000 non-Greek manuscripts

B. Coptic, Syriac, Latin, etc. . .

C. Early Church Fathers:

1. Quotations from the New Testament
2. Sermons
3. Commentaries
4. Writings

III. The Number of New Testament Manuscripts Compared to Other Ancient Writings

- A. Average Greek/Roman authors' manuscripts are about 20
- B. New Testament manuscripts number around 20,000
- C. Josephus - 20 copies
- D. Livius - 30 copies
- E. Tacitus - 3 copies

IV. Dates for New Testament Manuscripts vs. First Century Historians

- A. Livius (Livy) (59 B.C. - 17 A.D.)
 - 1. From the founding of the City of Rome
 - 2. Waiting about 300 years before copies were discovered
- B. Tacitus (A.D. 56-120)
 - 1. Waiting some 800 years before copies were discovered
 - 2. Three total copies
- C. Josephus (A.D. 37)
 - 1. Famous Jewish historian
 - 2. Waiting about 800 years for copies
 - 3. About 20 copies
- D. The earliest copies (fragments) are dated from the late 2nd century to early 3rd century
- E. From within or just over 100 years of the completion of the New Testament
- F. P52
- G. P66
- H. P46